



# The Prime Times

Please join us to celebrate  
40 years of proud achievements

The Council on Aging of Ottawa's

## 40th Annual General Meeting

Wednesday June 17, 2015

3:30 pm -5:30 pm

1247 Kilborn Place

Register online at [www.coaottawa.ca](http://www.coaottawa.ca)

40  
ANS YEARS  
1975 - 2015



## Live from the Studios of News Talk Radio 580 CFRA

Live from the studios of News Talk Radio 580 CFRA, downtown in the heart of the Byward Market, Welcome to Sunday Night... Here's Rabbi Bulka...

On March 22, John Johnson, COA President and Sarah Bercier, COA Executive Director, visited the studios of 580 CFRA as the guests on "Sunday Night with Rabbi Bulka". Following a brief United Way feature, John and Sarah spent the remainder of the hour talking with Rabbi Bulka and highlighting the history and work of the Council and the upcoming events of our 40th Anniversary. The podcast is available on the CFRA website at [www.cfra.com](http://www.cfra.com). Hover over "media", then select "podcasts", then select "Sunday Night with Rabbi Bulka".



John Johnson, COA President  
in the CFRA Studio

## International Women's Day COA

Women's Day has been observed since the early 1900's; it is celebrated by looking and reflecting on the core issues for which this day stands – equality and recognition.



Guest speakers (from left to right) with MC John Johnson, Sarah Bercier, Clare Beckton, Bernice Kwakyewa Aye and Dr. Safaa Fouda at COA International Women's Day celebration explored the theme "**We Have Come a Long Way... Reflections on Women's Achievements During Recent Decades**". Leadership, retirement, personal experiences and life on Canadian soil were the topics highlighted to recognize accomplishments and contributions of women past and present, positive messages to inspire all women.

Progress is possible, however women have to make it happen: they have come a long way and the journey continues.

# Age-Friendly is Good for Customers and Business



*Guardian New Edinburgh Pharmacist Owner Frank Tonon and dispensary staff*



*Richard Ladas, Store Manager Farm Boy Merivale Road*



*Unitarian House Executive Director Christina O'Neil, Residents Association President Alice Bushe, and Nadene Keon, Director of Care and Resident Services*



*Loblaws Gloucester Centre Store Manager Alan Lawrie and staff*

Being age-friendly is just plain good business. The more businesses Age-Friendly Ottawa is recognizing, based on seniors' recommendations, the clearer this becomes. Banks, dry cleaners, florists, grocery stores and drug stores may vary a lot in the goods and services they offer, but they share the most important age-friendly characteristics.

## Courtesy and Consideration

The Guardian New Edinburgh Pharmacy on Beechwood has an unusually large dispensary, staffed by up to 10 people at a time. Marla Tonon, store administrator and daughter of pharmacist owner Frank Tonon, explains how they respond to local seniors needs. "Because most doctors have now put a limitation on how many questions/ailments their patients can address during appointments, the pharmacists have been able to step up and fill in that gap. Our pharmacists spend a lot of time with customers that have questions or concerns about their medications. I think time itself has become such a valuable commodity and most seniors really appreciate extra guidance especially when it comes to something as important and serious as their health."

## Accessibility and Convenience

The Guardian Pharmacy has dedicated a section exclusively to home health care items used by seniors who need a bit of help living independently. This ensures that seniors with mobility issues can easily find items without searching around.

The Gloucester Centre Loblaws staff members, led by Store Manager Alan Lawrie, are constantly looking for ways to improve their older customers' shopping experience. Customer Service Manager Jill Dinelle's oversees biweekly shopping trips by seniors from the Beaconhill Community Centre. When the seniors arrive by bus, they get their shopping done in as little as half an hour. They get assistance gathering shopping list items, get a designated cashier aisle reserved for them, and have items boxed up and delivered. Staff look forward to these visits, says Dinelle, "It's all very friendly. We've gotten to know each other by name." Loblaws staff become part of an informal support network, making inquiries if a customer seems unwell or has missed several visits.

Lawrie is always thinking about reaching out and "enhancing their experience". Observing that the state of disrepair of the eyeglasses of some of the seniors arriving on the Thursday shuttle from area seniors residences, he "thought of asking our optician to go out on the bus to the residences and fix up those glasses. I am also looking to get permission to send the pharmacist to check up on their medications, and the dietician to give a free consultation."

## Empowering the Individual

At Unitarian House, Nadene Keon, Director of Care and Resident Services, and the other staff do their best to educate residents on how to take charge of their health, letting them know what their rights are and encouraging them to be advocates in their own behalf when dealing with medical professionals. “When people go see their doctors they are supposed to talk about just one health issue and do it in 15 minutes,” says Keon. “We encourage residents to speak up when they think they need more time and we also get them to list all the health issues that are of concern to them and then have the doctor pick which of these they consider the top priority to be addressed during a visit.”

At Unitarian House there is also an old-fashioned, informal buddy system among apartment dwellers and those living on the retirement floor. Much like family members, long-time neighbours will alert staff to subtle differences in behaviour and appearance in neighbours that could indicate possible health issues. Staff then follow up to assess the situation.

## Age-Friendliness for All

What does age-friendliness mean in the context of the New Edinburgh Pharmacy? Store Administrator Marla Tonon says “extra care isn’t extraneous from our staff training, it is engrained in the concept of being a community pharmacy. Building rapport and trust is especially important in a community based pharmacy. Our customers care for the wellbeing of our store and provide us with loyalty and support and we in turn care for them as we would our own family. Our clients are already unique in the sense that they require extra sympathy and care. They may be coming from a place where they struggle with disabilities or impairments, they may not be feeling well or they may be in pain, they may have just waited extensive periods in the hospital and doctor’s office.”

Richard Ladas, store manager at the Merivale Road Farm Boy, is acutely aware that “seniors aren’t welcome everywhere”. He instills an awareness, particularly in his younger staff, that seniors can be all too easily ignored. It becomes second nature to be patient, to help, and to ask if they need additional assistance finding items, or getting groceries to their cars. Asked if he had advice for other businesses on the benefits of being age-friendly, Ladas says, “Don’t discriminate based on age. After all, we are all eventually going to be older and none of us wants to be ignored. Just be a good person in dealing with all your customers and they will appreciate it.”

Submit a [checklist](#) to recognize a business near you.

## Advancing the Age-Friendly Agenda



### *Community Support and Health Services*

Many seniors have difficulties accessing and navigating community support and health services. Difficulties arise due to limited advertising of programs and services, weak coordination among agencies in a particular sector and limited financial resources for service delivery. Many community agencies rely on a network of volunteers to deliver their programs, such as those that arrange to drive frail elderly patients to medical appointments.

An Age-Friendly Ottawa means that seniors are able to access and navigate an integrated system of community support and health services which are inclusive, responsive and tailored to individual needs. This issue was the number one priority that emerged during the Age-Friendly Ottawa needs assessment and consultation with seniors held in 2011.

The Take Charge of Your Health pilot project is designed to train volunteer seniors to help other seniors obtain the information they need to connect to community support and health services and make more informed healthcare decisions. Seniors are trained as peer-learning facilitators (or “Health Ambassadors”) and go on to facilitate a series of health literacy sessions with small groups of seniors on a variety of topics such as Talking to Your Doctor, Dealing with the Unexpected and Choosing to Age at Home. A total of 70 seniors, including 13 Francophones, participated in one of the four training sessions offered at the Council on Aging in March and April 2015.

Beyond helping seniors to connect to community support and health services, Age-Friendly Ottawa is committed to advocating for the necessary coordination and financial resources to support the community support services sector in Ottawa. Better coordination and adequate funding based on the growing demand for community services will help seniors to age safely at home. Improved access to these services is a crucial part of the vision for an Age-Friendly Ottawa.

# Events



## Is it Alzheimer's or Normal Aging?

Although the statistics on Alzheimer's and Dementia are staggering (740,000 currently living with dementia in Canada, projected to rise to 1.5 million by the year 2040), there is room for optimism, according

to Dr. Andrew Frank, Cognitive Neurologist and Medical Director of the Bruyère Memory Program.

There were more than 100 people in the attentive and appreciative audience at the March 25 presentation at the Council On Aging's Lunch and Learn Series as Dr. Frank outlined the differences between normal memory lapses due to aging, such as forgetting where you left your reading glasses, and accelerated decline due to Alzheimer's or dementia, as exhibited by not recognizing immediate family members or forgetting how to do daily tasks. Although there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's there are drugs available, and clinical trials underway, to stabilize individuals with mild Alzheimer's.

The best defense against the disease is to live an active, healthy lifestyle by eating well, engaging in exercise and social activities and by treating underlying health issues like diabetes and high blood pressure. Although people with a diagnosed family member run a slightly elevated risk, it is not inevitable that they will also develop Alzheimer's.

Dr. Frank praised the work of the Alzheimer's Society ([www.alzheimers.ca](http://www.alzheimers.ca)) and Claude Gravelle, MP for introducing a private member's bill calling for a National Dementia Strategy for Canada. For further information visit: <http://claudegravelle.ndp.ca/national-dementia-strategy>



**DONATE** to build an age-friendly community

# Francophone Affairs Activities

The luncheon event held on February 4, under the theme Access to Justice for Francophone Ottawa Seniors, generated strong interest among participants. Mr. René Guitard, an attorney with the Clinique juridique francophone de l'Est d'Ottawa, made a presentation about the main types of services requested by seniors and offered some possible solutions to common problems. He talked about the barriers that some seniors face, such as ageism and financial constraints that impede access to French-language legal services.

The Contribution of Women to our Collective Future. As part of International Women's Day, a group of women along with a few men came to listen to the testimonials of three women who have contributed to the evolution of women in their community:



Mariette Fraser who, after a 36-year career as a teacher, retired as Assistant Deputy Minister

responsible for French-language education in the Ontario Ministry of Education; Monique Lussier, a retired professor from the University of Ottawa's School of Psychology, a pioneer in that university's Women's Studies Program, and an expert in organizational psychology; and Annick Tanguay, a doctoral candidate in experimental psychology at the University of Ottawa and a volunteer with the Council on Aging who has a special interest in cognitive aging, memory and empathy. All three shed light on the evolution of feminism to the present day, focusing on the battles that have been won and the challenges that lie ahead.

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**Upcoming Events**  
Visit our website at [www.coaottawa.ca](http://www.coaottawa.ca)

May 27	Francophone Forum
June 3	Spirituality Conference
June 17	Annual General Meeting